



A Study on Marketing Strategies Used by Alkem Laboratories for Brand Building of Pan-D Antacid Tablet

Krishna Kadam¹, Suryakant Chavan², Shilpa Pise³

¹S.B. Patil Institute of Management, Pune, ²Institute of Management & Research, Jalgaon; ³Director, Institute of Management Sciences & Research (IMSR), Nagpur.

ABSTRACT

Aim: The aim of the study is to analyze the marketing strategies adopted by Alkem Laboratories for brand building of PAN-D antacid tablet in the gastrointestinal segment and to understand the role of medical representatives, doctors, and pharmacists in influencing brand perception and prescription behavior.

Methodology: The study is based on both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected from 120 respondents in Pune, including doctors, pharmacists, and medical representatives, using structured questionnaires and personal interviews. Secondary data were obtained from company reports, journals, websites, and published research. The collected data were analyzed using percentage analysis to identify key factors influencing brand building and prescription loyalty.

Results: The findings of the study indicate that regular visits by medical representatives (96%), Continuing Medical Education (CME) programs (84%), and availability of clinical evidence (83%) play a major role in strengthening PAN-D's brand image among doctors. Pharmacists' stocking decisions are largely influenced by doctor demand (80%) and company reputation (60%). The study also identifies challenges such as price competition, limited promotional budgets, and intense market competition as significant barriers to the adoption of new pharmaceutical brands.

Conclusion: The study concludes that Alkem Laboratories has successfully built a strong brand image for PAN-D through consistent field engagement, effective medical representative interactions, and ethical, science-based promotion. Continuous doctor education, strong company reputation, and relationship marketing have significantly contributed to sustained prescription loyalty. In a highly competitive pharmaceutical market, maintaining ethical promotion practices and scientific validation remains essential for long-term brand leadership.

Key Words: PAN-D antacid, Alkem laboratories, Brand image, Marketing strategies, Pharmaceutical brands, Science based promotion, Ethical promotion practices, Market competition

INTRODUCTION

Pharmaceutical marketing plays a crucial role in connecting science with society by ensuring that effective medicines reach those who need them most. Unlike consumer marketing, it operates in a highly regulated and knowledge-driven environment where brand success depends on credibility, ethics, and professional trust. Every stakeholder — from doctors and medical representatives to pharmacists — contributes to shaping the reputation and acceptance of a pharmaceutical brand.

Doctors form the central link in the prescription process, and their trust in a brand is built on proven clinical efficacy, patient outcomes, and transparent communication. Medical

Representatives (MRs) act as the bridge between companies and healthcare professionals, promoting scientific information, providing product updates, and maintaining consistent relationships. Pharmacists, on the other hand, influence brand visibility and patient accessibility through their stocking, recommendations, and trade-level insights.

Together, these three perspectives create an integrated framework that determines how effectively a pharmaceutical product can succeed in the market. In the case of Alkem Laboratories' PAN-D, this coordinated approach — focusing on scientific validation, ethical promotion, and strong field engagement — has helped the brand achieve high trust and consistent prescription preference among healthcare professionals.

Corresponding Author:

Dr. Shilpa Pise, Director, Institute of Management Sciences & Research (IMSR), Nagpur; Email: office.imsr@gmail.com

ISSN: 2231-2196 (Print)

ISSN: 0975-5241 (Online)

Received: 23.09.2025

Revised: 02.11.2025

Accepted: 14.11.2025

Published: 29.11.2025

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

1. To identify the key marketing strategies adopted by Alkem Laboratories for PAN-D. 2. To evaluate the effectiveness of Alkem's promotional activities (e.g., MR visits, CMEs, samples) in building brand trust and recall.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

• Research Question :

What marketing strategies has Alkem Laboratories used to build the PAN-D brand, and how effective are these strategies in influencing doctors' prescribing behavior?

• Data Collection Methods:

- o Primary Data: Collected through structured questionnaires and interviews with Doctors, MR, Pharmacists.
- o Secondary Data: Sourced from journals, industry reports, company websites, published articles, and competitor analysis.

• Sampling Design

- **Population:** Doctors, MR, Pharmacists. associated with Alkem Laboratories and competing brands.
- **Sample Size:** 120 Respondents
- **Sampling Technique:** Convenient and purposive sampling, considering respondents directly related to prescription, sales, and promotion of antacid brands.

• Tools of Data Collection

- Questionnaires designed separately for Doctors, MR, Pharmacists.
- Both open-ended and close-ended questions included.
- Likert scale (Strongly Agree → Strongly Disagree) used for attitudinal measurement.

• Tools of Analysis

- Descriptive statistics (percentages, averages) to summarize data.
- Graphs, charts, and tables for better visualization.

1	Research Type	Descriptive & Analytical research
2	Geographical Area	Pune
3	Sampling Unit	Doctors, MR, Pharmacists.
4	Sample size	120 respondents
5	Primary data Collection method	Survey method
6	Data Collection Tools	Structured Questionnaire
7	Data analysis Tools	Statistical method such as charts and graphs
8	Research method	Convenience & Purposive Sampling method

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

Doctor's perspective

- o Frequency of prescribing GI brands by Doctors (e.g, Pan D, Razo D, Sompraz D OR Other)?

Response Option	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Pan D	74	92%
Razo D	02	03%
Sompraz D	01	01%
Others	03	04%

The data indicates that Pan D holds a dominant position with 92% frequency, showing its strong preference and trust among users. In comparison, Razo D accounts for 3%, Sompraz D for 1%, and other brands collectively make up 4%. This clearly highlights that Pan D is the most preferred and widely used product in the market, reflecting its strong brand reputation, effectiveness, and market leadership over other competing brands.

- o Doctor's trust on new brand in the market?

Response Option	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Clinical data/evidence shared	66	83%
Peer reviews or experience	63	79%
Company image	20	25%
MR communication	73	91%
Samples given to try	36	45%
Price advantage	4	5%
Sponsorship/Conference support	5	6%

The data shows that MR communication is the most influential factor at 91%, followed by clinical data or evidence at 83% and peer reviews or experience at 79%. Samples given to try hold moderate importance at 45%, while company image influences 25% of respondents. Factors like sponsorship or conference support (6%) and price advantage (5%) have minimal impact. Overall, the results highlight that doctors rely mainly on MR communication and clinical evidence when making prescription decisions.

- o Which promotional activities doctors feel that most companies use to build their brands? (Multiple select)

Response Option	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Medical samples	57	71%
Continuing Medical Education (CMEs)	67	84%

Sponsored events/training	21	26%
Regular MR visits	77	96%
Digital promotions (WhatsApp/App/Email updates)	9	11%
Patient support programs	26	33%
Patient education materials	8	10%

The data reveals that regular MR visits have the highest influence at 96%, followed by Continuing Medical Education (CMEs) at 84%, showing their key role in engaging doctors. Medical samples also play a significant role with 71% influence, helping doctors assess product effectiveness. In contrast, patient support programs (33%) and sponsored events or training (26%) have moderate impact. Digital promotions (11%) and patient education materials (10%) show minimal influence. Overall, the findings indicate that personal interaction and educational initiatives are the most effective marketing approaches in the pharmaceutical field.

o How effective Alkem's marketing strategies are in building the PAN-D brand among doctors?

Response Option	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very Effective	26	33%
Effective	50	63%
Neutral	3	9%
Ineffective	0	0%

The data shows that a majority of respondents, 63%, found the activity to be effective, while 33% considered it very effective, indicating a strong positive response overall. Only 9% remained neutral, and none rated it as ineffective. This suggests that the implemented strategies or activities were highly successful and well-received, reflecting their strong impact and relevance among participants.

o In doctor's view, what is the biggest mistake pharma companies make while launching new brands? (Open-ended)

It is evident that the most common mistake pharma companies make when launching new brands is prioritizing aggressive promotion over scientific credibility. Many companies fail to provide sufficient clinical evidence, real-world data, or peer-reviewed support, which undermines trust among prescribers. Over-reliance on marketing gimmicks, inadequate MR training, and unclear differentiation from existing products further reduce brand impact. Additionally, poor pricing strategies and neglecting patient affordability often limit market acceptance. Overall, a lack of strong scientific backing, transparent communication, and patient-centric value proposition remains the biggest hurdle to successful brand launches in the pharmaceutical industry.

MR View:

o What challenges doctors face while promoting a newly launched brand? (Multiple select)

Response Option	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Doctors prefer established brands	12	60%
Price comparison from chemists	16	80%
Poor product availability	4	20%
Lack of promotional budget/support	6	30%
Resistance to change by prescribers	4	20%
Competitor's aggressive marketing	11	55%

The data highlights several key challenges faced while promoting newly launched pharmaceutical brands. The most prominent issue is price comparison from chemists (80%), which significantly impacts the doctor's decision-making and product acceptance. Another major challenge is doctors' preference for established brands (60%), as they tend to trust and continue prescribing well-known and proven products. Competitor's aggressive marketing (55%) also creates intense competition, making it harder for new brands to gain visibility. Furthermore, lack of promotional budget or company support (30%) limits marketing activities and field coverage. Poor product availability (20%) and resistance to change among prescribers (20%) further contribute to slow adoption. Overall, the data suggests that to overcome these challenges, companies must focus on competitive pricing, consistent availability, continuous doctor engagement, and stronger promotional backing to establish new brands effectively in the market.

PHARMACIST PERSPECTIVE:

o What factors influence pharmacist's decision to recommend or stock a Pan D? (Multiple select)

Response Option	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Company reputation	12	60%
Doctor demand	16	80%
Stockist incentives/margins	4	20%
Consumer preference	6	30%
Promotional offers or schemes	4	20%

The data shows that doctor demand (80%) is the most influ-

ential factor affecting brand success, indicating that prescribing behavior plays a major role in driving sales. Company reputation (60%) is the next key factor, reflecting the importance of trust and credibility in brand selection. Consumer preference (30%) has a moderate impact, showing that end-user satisfaction also contributes to market performance. Meanwhile, stockist incentives/margins (20%) and promotional offers or schemes (20%) have comparatively lesser influence. Overall, the findings suggest that strong doctor engagement and a reputable company image are the most critical elements for a brand's success in the pharmaceutical market.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that Alkem Laboratories has effectively built a strong brand presence for PAN-D through a combination of scientific credibility, consistent MR engagement, and educational marketing initiatives. Regular MR visits and Continuing Medical Education (CMEs) emerged as the most impactful promotional tools, while clinical evidence and transparent communication were key factors influencing doctor trust. The findings also reveal that doctor demand and company reputation significantly drive product preference and sales. However, challenges such as intense market competition, price sensitivity, and limited promotional budgets remain areas for improvement. Overall, Alkem's balanced strategy of ethical promotion, brand visibility, and relationship management has successfully positioned PAN-D as a trusted and widely prescribed gastrointestinal brand in the market.

Conflict of interest: None

Financial support: None

Authors contribution:

Krishna Kadam & Suryakant Chavan did data collection from doctors, MRs, pharmacists, preparation editing and submission of complete manuscript, Shilpa Pise helped to provide complete proof of correction, complete conceptualization and guidance.

REFERENCES

1. Kotler, P., & Keller, K. L. (2022). Marketing management (16th ed.). Pearson Education.
2. Alkem Laboratories Ltd. (2024). Company profile and annual report.
3. Indian Pharmaceutical Alliance (IPA). (2023). Annual report on the Indian pharmaceutical market. New Delhi: IPA Publications.
4. Mehta, A., & Sharma, V. (2023). Impact of medical representative activities on doctor prescription behavior. *Indian Journal of Pharmaceutical Marketing*, 15(2), 45–52.
5. Gupta, R., & Patel, S. (2022). Marketing trends and brand-building strategies in the Indian pharmaceutical sector. *Journal of Healthcare Marketing Research*, 10(1), 25–38.
6. World Health Organization (WHO). (2023). Ethical criteria for medicinal drug promotion. Geneva: WHO Press.
7. Singh, P., & Deshmukh, K. (2021). The role of continuing medical education (CME) in influencing doctor prescription patterns. *Asian Journal of Pharmaceutical and Clinical Research*, 14(3), 112–118.